

# **Education Criteria for the Selection of Fire Chief: Raising the Bar.**

**Executive Leadership**

By:

Richard J. Andring, Deputy Chief

Yakima Fire Department  
Yakima, Washington

**An applied research project submitted to the National Fire Academy  
As part of the Executive Fire Officer Program**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The events surrounding September 11, 2001 have brought about an unprecedented rapid change in the nation's fire service. The need for strong leaders possessing the skills to implement change rapidly and effectively is paramount. A proven method of enhancing leadership skills is through education. In the private sector, education is a prerequisite to employment and/or promotion. The fire service, on the other hand, has resisted a change toward education requirements for promotion.

The problem is that the City of Yakima, Washington does not have a college education requirement for the position of Fire Chief. The purpose of this applied research project was to identify educational criteria that would be useful in the selection of a fire chief for the City of Yakima and to provide a recommendation to the City Manager. Action research methods were utilized to answer resolving questions, and the procedures involved searching for information about educational requirements for the position of fire chief, an analysis of classified advertisements for the position, and development of a feedback tool used to measure the attitude and acceptance of educational requirements.

The results of the literature reviewed showed that education has been recognized as an important part of being a fire chief for over a quarter of a century and that college experience raises the level of professionalism within the fire service. The analysis of classified advertisements for fire chief demonstrated the value that agencies place on education for fire chief candidates. Results from the feedback instrument demonstrated strong local support for a college requirement for fire chief candidates.

Recommendations were made to provide minimum education requirements for fire chief, including that the City Manager and Fire Chief need to aggressively promote the development of minimum education requirements for company and chief officers.

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## INTRODUCTION

The events surrounding September 11, 2001 have brought about an unprecedented change in the nation and in the nations fire service. Prior to the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon and the Twin Towers, fire chiefs were faced with change and challenges in a multitude of areas. As the result of 9/11, change and the challenges facing the fire service have grown exponentially as the nation and the nation's fire service seeks to find ways to cope with issues such as homeland security, terrorism, emergency medical services, weapons of mass destruction, a faltering economy, anthrax, urban search and rescue, and haz-mat.

The most pressing issues faced by fire service leaders today are their ability to provide strong leadership and to manage their rapidly changing environment effectively. What can be done to insure the survival of the fire service and its ability to cope with the challenges it faces in the coming decades? Is education a factor that enhances the ability of fire service leaders to lead their organizations effectively in this rapidly changing environment?

The National Fire Academy (NFA) provided an example of its ability to change after the 9/11 attacks. The NFA recognized the need for fire service leaders to have knowledge and experience in managing major disasters such as those the nation suffered on 9/11. In response, the NFA changed the graduation requirements for the Executive Fire Officer Program by requiring completion of the *Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management* course. The academy's leadership reacted swiftly and the program change was implemented within a few months. To be successful, fire

chiefs must be able to follow the example of the National Fire Academy and demonstrate strong leadership and a willingness to change.

### **Problem Statement**

The problem promoting this research project was that the City of Yakima, Washington has not established education criteria for the selection of a Fire Chief. A high school diploma is, and has been, the highest level of education required for the position for more than three decades. The most recent job announcement for “Fire Chief” issued by the City of Yakima established the following as the minimum qualification: “Eight years of recent experience in the Fire Service within the State of Washington desired. Four years experience in a Fire Command and/or Supervisory position within the State of Washington, desired.” These desired qualifications are experience based rather than education based.

The purpose of this applied research project was to develop education selection criteria for the position of Fire Chief. Action research methods were utilized to answer the following research questions:

1. What, if any, are the National and Regional education criteria for the selection of Fire Chiefs?
2. What, if any, are the desired education criteria for Fire Chief in similar sized fire departments?
3. What do fire department personnel, city department heads, and community leaders see as the desired education criteria for the selection of a Fire Chief?

## **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

The City of Yakima is located in the central part of the State of Washington. A Charter City with a Council/Manager for government, Yakima provides a full range of services to the community including Fire, Police, Transit, Water, Sewer, and a variety of other public services. The Yakima Fire Department protects the 72,000 citizens of the City of Yakima and provides support for neighboring jurisdictions through the use of mutual aid agreements. The department has 101 personnel, five stations, and an annual operations and capital improvement budget of \$5.5 million. The department administrative staff consists of a Chief, Deputy Chief of Operations, Deputy Chief of Support, three Shift Battalion Chiefs, and an Administrative Assistant.

The first step in implementing a formal education requirement for promotion within the Yakima Fire Department was embodied in the 1996 – 1998 Collective Bargaining Agreement by and between The City of Yakima and Local #469, International Association of Firefighters, AFL-CIO. Embodied within this agreement is a promotional education requirement for company officers. The agreement requires that persons hired after January 1, 1996 shall have successfully completed thirty (30) fire science degree credits for eligibility for appointment to Lieutenant and forty five (45) fire science degree credits for eligibility for appointment to Captain. Since the ratification of the 1996 – 1998 Collective Bargaining Agreement, no further steps have been taken to identify and implement additional educational criteria for promotion at any level within the organization. Currently, the education requirement for promotion to the department's highest post is merely a high school diploma.

Two of the department's last three chiefs have been appointed from outside the organization. Without clearly defined education requirements, department members seeking the organization's highest position will continue to shoot from the hip and find themselves ill prepared, in many cases, to compete with outside candidates.

This concept of education requirements for fire chiefs is not a new one. The Los Angeles City Fire Department introduced the idea of education and training standards for firefighters in the mid 1920's. In response to this training shortfall, the Los Angeles Fire College was established in 1932. As the years progressed, there were a number of initiatives designed to improve the training standard process, including the establishment of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) professional qualifications, the development of the National Professional Qualifications and Standards Board, and International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC). One item which has always been lacking is minimal educational standards for the fire chief's position (Coleman, 1998).

Professionalism is generally defined as assured competence in an occupation. Methods of guaranteeing this competence must be developed if the fire service is truly committed to achieving professionalism. Education is one method of assuring this competence (Marinucci, 1998).

The fire service draws many parallels to the military, including organization and development, policies and procedures. In the military, a baccalaureate degree is almost essential to qualify for promotion to senior officer ranks (Baldwin, 1996). Similarly, a lack of higher education for fire chiefs is becoming a significant challenge for the fire service. Training for fire chiefs utilizing traditional methods, such as experience, is no

longer effective or acceptable. Frequently, fire chiefs achieve their position by being in the right place at the right time (Bergel, 1997).

The significance of education as requirement for the position of fire chief is evident in a need made more urgent by national current events for strong leadership skills, as well as by the need to stay abreast of rapid changes in fire management and national security. These needs are further presented in the following Literature Review. This applied research project relates to the National Fire Academy's Executive Leadership curriculum and is directly associated with Unit 6: Succession/Replacement Planning portions of the course.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In the early decades of this century, people tended to think of the fire chief as the "Number One Fireman" in their community. He was the toughest, most leather-lunged guy who climbed to the top of the fire department heap. Political influence ran rampant, and control of the fire department was often among the prizes offered to the victor after a successful election campaign (Carter, 1989). The first recorded idea of standards for training was promulgated in the mid 1920's. Throughout the next 70 years, national, state, and local entities developed various standards and qualifications. For various reasons, requirements for fire chiefs were rarely addressed. In addition, the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to lead a firefighter crew are not identified in any of today's state or national standards (Coleman, 1998).

The lack of a requirement for higher education of fire officers is a challenge fire departments everywhere are facing. Traditional methods utilized for training after



officers are promoted are no longer effective, nor are they acceptable (Bergel, 1997). In addressing this problem, “professionalism” can be approached in view of its definition, which is “attaining competence in one’s particular area of expertise.” And so, one way that an individual can be considered professional is by completing a program of education and certification (Marinucci, 1998).

According to the Wingspread Conference of 1966 on fire service administration, education, and research, professional status begins with education. The following quote was published as “Statements of National Significance to the Fire Problem in the United States” in the synopsis of that conference:

- Formal education achievement should help a person acquire a considered sense of values that will give direction, meaning, and integrity to his life and his work. He will need certain basic abilities and skills that are widely transferable and needed in nearly every walk of life, including:
- Mastery of the scientific method—that is, the process of objectively seeing and solving problems.
  - An understanding of human relations.
  - Skill in communicating—in speech and writing.
  - An ability to organize limited resources to achieve set goals and objectives.
  - An ability to concentrate and apply himself wholeheartedly to the job at hand until completed.
  - An open and flexible mind that, nevertheless, has a foundation of fundamental convictions and principles.

- An ability to keep on learning on and off the job.

A fire executive is likely to achieve more if he also finds zest, satisfaction and sense of fulfillment in the exercise of his abilities. (Johnson Foundation, 1966)

Ten years later, the Wingspread II conference stated that “A means of deliberate and systematic development of all fire service personnel through the executive level is still needed. There is an educational void near the top” (Johnson Foundation, 1976). The Wingspread III conference of 1986 acknowledged the progress in creating educational opportunities expressly for the fire service offered at community colleges throughout the country. While progress had been recognized, the report stated, “Professional development in the fire service has made significant strides, but improvement is still needed” (Johnson Foundation, 1986). Wingspread IV: Statements of Critical Issues to The Fire and Emergency Services in the United States also addressed the issue of education in 1996, stating:

Mid to senior level fire and emergency managers must have college experience if recognition of their professional status is going to be maintained. Fire and emergency service managers of the future must be prepared to discuss issues, on an equal academic footing, with architects, engineers, city managers, and health care professionals. A master’s degree in a discipline of relevance to the fire service, an appropriate level of training, and line and staff experience commensurate with the responsibilities of the position, should be the minimum acceptable qualification for a career fire chief. (Johnson Foundation, 1996)

The National Fire Academy (NFA) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) have both made it clear that higher education is an important ingredient in the career advancement of fire personnel, and that higher education is critical to managing the complexities of the fire service. The NFA strongly supports professional development that encourages both associate and baccalaureate degrees (Rivenbark, 2000). Regardless of an organization's size, fire chiefs must manage increasingly diverse and complex issues, which require higher education to assess risks and benefits through these multidimensional agencies (Kemp, 1999).

The influence of an individual is directly proportional to the level of education attained (Yoo and Wright, 1994). In accordance with this certainty, a survey of fire departments across the nation reveals that almost 70 percent will begin to require a minimum of a baccalaureate education for fire chief positions by 2005. Furthermore, over 80 percent of hiring authorities forecast a college degree requirement for fire chiefs in the next several years (Thomsen, 1996). Many fire departments already require college credits as pre-entry requirements. The next logical step is the development of a life-long learning agreement under the auspices of a community college.

Beyond degree requirements, programs could be developed for identifying future leaders based on job accomplishment, interest, and promotional suitability. These people would benefit from advanced education in baccalaureate and, if possible, master's-level education in public administration. Our future chiefs would emerge from this cadre of educated people (Carter, 1989). As a result of changing needs within our nation's fire departments and an increased need for strong leadership, city managers are placing a

higher priority on management concerns for fire chiefs rather than on operational issues (Coleman, 1998).

The Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs has developed a Chief Fire Officer program, which is currently being tested in Canada. The Canadian program requires a higher education degree for consideration for a fire chief's position (Sherburne, 1998). Likewise, there is currently an initiative by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) to develop a Professional Designation Program for Chief Fire Officers, which includes higher education as a requirement (International Association of Fire Chiefs, 1999). Resources show that formal education should be included in the national certification system for fire chiefs (Crapo, 1998).

## **Summary**

The literature review showed that education has been recognized as an important part of being a fire chief for over a quarter of a century, and that education is a proven method of enhancing leadership skills. The research further indicated that college experience raises the level of professionalism within the fire service. In the private sector, education is a prerequisite to employment and/or promotion. The fire service, on the other hand, has resisted a change toward education requirements for promotion. In order to improve the professional status of the fire service and insure its ability to meet the ever-changing demands of our current environment, the fire service must embrace the concept of higher educational standards.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Definitions of Terms**

Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs (CAFC): a professional association representing Canadian career and volunteer fire chiefs.

Chief Fire Officer Designation CFOD: a voluntary program designed to recognize individuals who can show their excellence in seven measured components including: Experience, Education, Professional Development, Professional Contributions, Association Membership, Community Involvement, and Technical Competencies.

Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP): a curriculum of study at the National Fire Academy geared towards development of chief fire officers and fire executives.

International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC): a network of more than 12,000 chief fire and emergency officers. Members include the world's leading experts in firefighting, emergency medical services, terrorism response, hazardous materials spills, natural disasters, search & rescue and public safety legislation.

Learning Resource Center (LRC): Library located on the campus of the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

Public Administration (PA): discipline of study related to the management of public agencies.

Master of Business Administration (MBA): discipline of higher education at the college level related to the management of business operations.

Master of Public Administration (MPA): discipline of higher education at the college level related to the management of public agencies.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA): a nonprofit organization that researches and formulates consensus standards for public and private fire protection agencies.

Contrary to the mistaken belief of many, the NFPA is not a Federal agency and NFPA standards and codes are not enforceable unless adopted by an authority in a particular jurisdiction.

National Fire Academy (NFA): a Federal institution located in Emmitsburg, Maryland providing opportunities of higher learning to the fire service.

Wingspread Study: Conference held in 1966, 1976, 1986 and 1996 of fire service leaders sponsored by the Johnson Foundation and the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

### **Limitations and Assumptions**

- It was assumed that all involved in completing the feedback instrument answered honestly.
- It was assumed that the applied research projects from the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officers Program are valid.

### **Research Methodology**

The research procedure used in this applied research project began with a literature review initially conducted at the Learning Resource Center (LRC) at the National Emergency Training Center in March of 2002. Additional information was gathered utilizing interlibrary loans from the LRC, Yakima Fire Department library and Yakima County Regional Library.

Due to time constraints placed upon the writer by the Operational Policies and Procedures Applied Research Guidelines, the author chose to analyze fire chief classified

ads rather than attempt to conduct a survey of similar sized departments nationally. Classified ads for a five-year period (1997-2001) that appeared in Fire Chief Magazine were analyzed. It was the belief of the author that this analysis would provide a good understanding of what fire departments and cities throughout the nation sought as educational requirements for the fire chief position.

A feedback instrument (appendix B) was utilized to determine what community members/leaders, department heads, and department officers viewed as desired educational criteria for their fire chief. Feedback instruments were distributed to members of the community who would normally be expected to interact with the fire chief in some capacity. A handful of these individuals, at some time, could be involved in future selection processes for fire chief. Sixty feedback instruments were distributed—twenty to each of the three groups.

## **RESULTS**

The results of this research project were based upon a literature review, an analysis of classified ads for fire chief for similar sized cities, and feedback instrument distributed to City of Yakima, Washington community leaders, department heads, and fire department officers.

### **Answers to Research Questions**

#### **1. What, if any, are the National and Regional education criteria for the selection of Fire Chiefs?**

The research shows that there is a consensus that college experience is necessary at the fire chief level. The level of college experience recommended or required varied

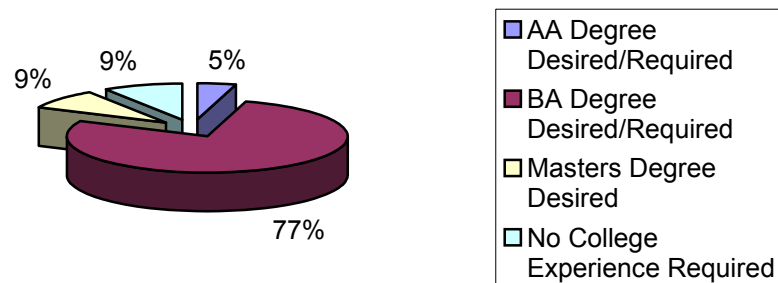
from an Associate Degree to a Masters Degree dependant upon the size and complexity of the individual fire department. While there is a general consensus that college experience is necessary and important, there exists no national or regional education standard for the position. The research shows that there are two educational models currently being tested for applicability to the fire service. The Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs and the International Association of Fire Chiefs have developed the models. The Chief Fire Officer program developed by the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs requires higher education in order to be Chief Fire Officer certified. The program developed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs and administered by the Commission on Chief Fire Officer Designation also places an emphasis on higher education, and includes point-weighted values for such.

**2. What, if any, are the desired education criteria for Fire Chief in similar sized fire departments?**

Research question 2 attempted to determine the level of formal education that comparable sized departments in the United States believed was appropriate for candidates applying for the position of fire chief. An analysis of fire chief position advertisements found in Fire Chief magazine (1997-2001) produced the following results: In nine percent of the cases, no college experience was required; in five percent of the cases an Associate degree was determined to be the minimum formal education requirement; a bachelor's degree was determined to be the minimum baseline eighty-eight percent of the time, with nine percent of comparable sized departments desiring a candidate with a master's degree. (See Figure 1)

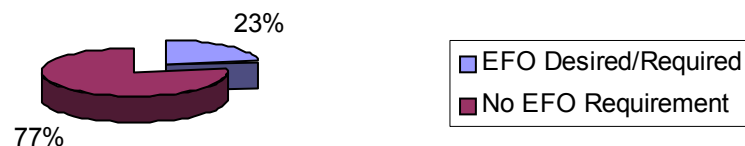


**Figure 1 - Periodical Survey Results Education Requirement for Fire Chief**



The analysis of Fire Chief Advertisements showed that graduates of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer program are sought for positions. The analysis of advertisements indicated that twenty-three percent of comparable departments desired chief candidates who had graduated from the program. (See Figure 2)

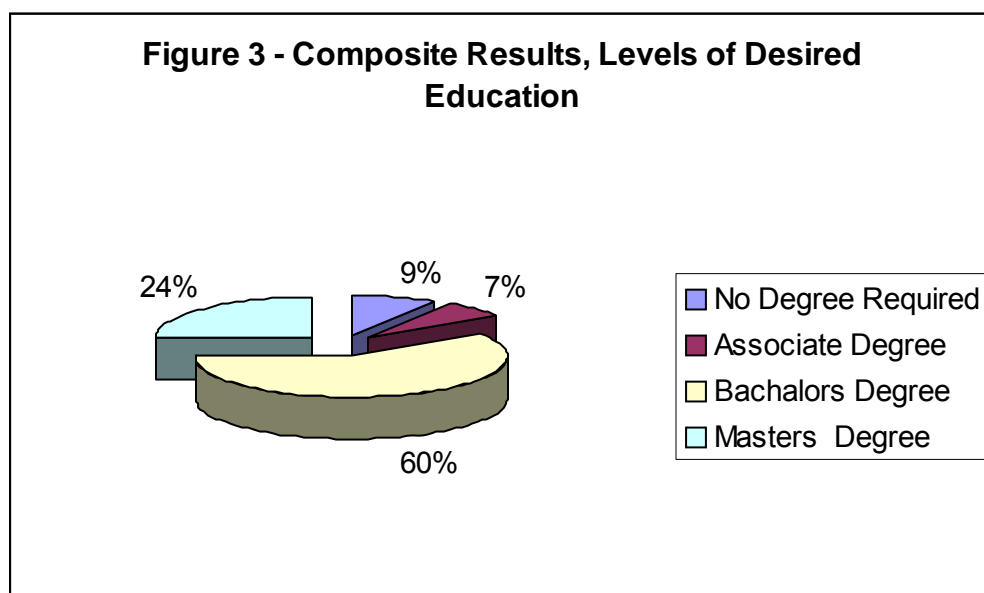
**Figure 2 - Departments Desiring Chief Candidates to be National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Graduates**



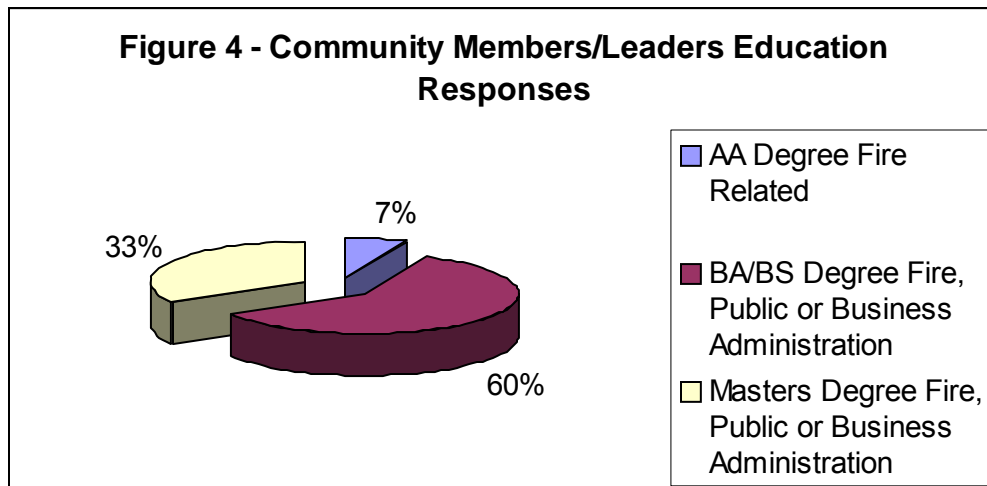
### **3. What do fire department personnel, city administrator/department/division head, community leaders see as the desired education criteria for the selection of a Fire Chief?**

The results of the feedback instrument indicated that the organization, city administrative staff, and community, value college experience and education. Sixty

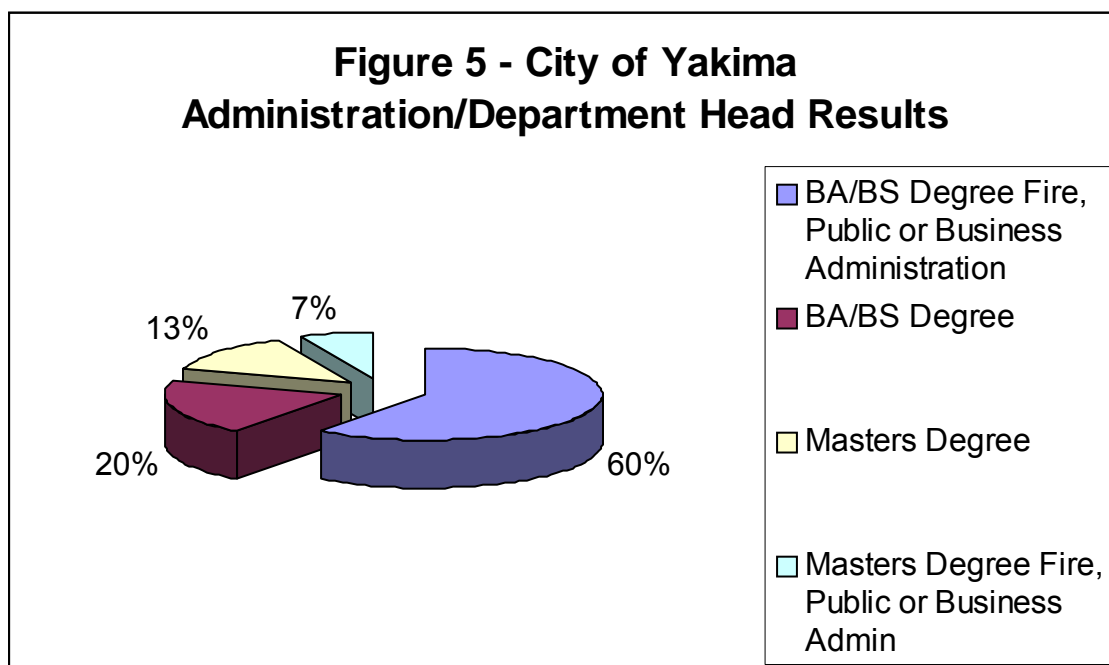
feedback instruments were distributed and forty-five were returned. Overall, ninety-one percent of those responding indicated that college experience was a desirable requirement for fire chief candidates. Sixty percent of those responding indicated that a bachelor's degree was most appropriate, while twenty four percent indicated that a master's degree was necessary. Overall, only seven percent of those responding felt that no college experience should be required of a fire chief candidate. (See Figure #3)



One hundred per cent of community members/leaders indicated that college experience was essential for the position of fire chief. Ninety three percent felt that the education level should be established at the bachelor's degree level or higher. Only seven percent of this group felt that an associate degree would be adequate, while thirty-three percent felt a master's degree would be most appropriate for the department's chief executive. (See Figure #4)

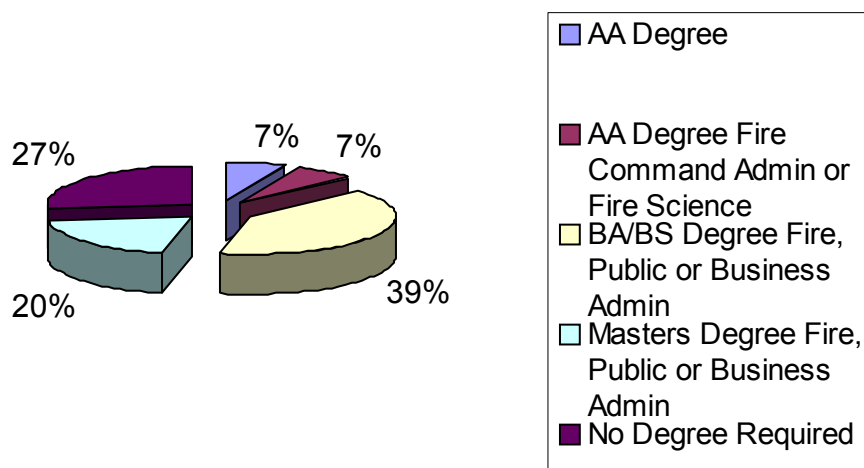


The results for the City of Yakima Administrative/Department Head group were similar to that of the Community Member/Leader group. In this group, however, one hundred percent of those responding indicated that education at the bachelor degree level or higher was necessary. Twenty percent of this group indicated a preference that the fire chief has a master's degree.



The results from the department's chief and company officers were much different from those received from the other two groups. In the chief/company officer group, twenty-seven percent of respondents felt that college experience was not necessary for the department's chief executive. Comments from those indicating college experience was not necessary included: "Focus on mission and service to the community is more important than formal education," "practical knowledge, common sense," "from what I have seen over the years a degree serves only to eliminate good people from testing," and "twenty years experience with the Yakima Fire Department would work best." Overall, seventy-three percent of the department's chief and company officers felt that college experience was necessary for the department's chief executive. One of the proponents of requiring a master's degree wrote, "Not so much for the actual knowledge on the job, but rather to be respected by the business community of which many have Master's degrees."

**Figure 6 - Chief and Company Officers Results**



## **DISCUSSION**

The research showed that there is a widely accepted consensus that balanced education, experience, and training are the components of upwardly mobile officers and fire chiefs. While there is consensus as to the importance of education, there are no national educational standards for fire chiefs. Other professions have minimum educational requirements in order to belong. Professions such as engineering, legal, and medical fields require a minimum of a baccalaureate degree to practice in these professions. The military requires that all senior officers must have earned a minimum of a baccalaureate degree prior to earning promotion.

While there is no national standard, the IAFC and the CAFC believe that education is an integral part of a fire chief's qualifications, and they place significant value on education in their development of the respective national certification programs. The Commission on Chief Fire Officer Designation was established to administer the national certification program developed by the IAFC. The CFOD program offers point awards towards designation as a Chief Fire Officer based upon the level of higher education. The Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs program also requires higher education for fire chiefs.

Education has been recognized as an important part of being a fire chief for over a quarter of a century. Fire service leaders recognize the need for education but have failed to establish a national standard. There is a belief that educational standards have not been addressed on a national level because many of the current fire chiefs could not meet the standards.

The analysis of classified advertisements for fire chief clearly indicated that organizations of similar size acknowledged the need to have leaders who were highly educated. In most cases, these organizations required or desired prospective fire chief candidates to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree.

The results of the feedback instrument demonstrated overwhelming support for the development of an educational requirement for the Yakima fire department's chief executive. Overall, ninety-one percent of those responding indicated that some level of college experience should be required. The results of the feedback instrument also demonstrated that there was a higher level of support for this requirement outside of the department than from within. There were those from within the organization who felt that many years of experience within the department was of more value than formal education at any level.

It appears that many fire departments are seeking graduates of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer program. The analysis of fire chief position advertisements (Fire Chief Magazine 1997-2001) indicated that twenty-two percent of similar sized departments found completion of the program to be desirable. These departments either required, or gave additional consideration for, fire chief candidates who had completed the program. The feedback instrument provided similar insight as sixty percent of those responding indicated that fire chief candidates should have completed, or be required to complete, the EFO program.

In order to compete with their peers in the public and private sector for funding and other resources, fire chiefs must become better educated. Controversy exists over what type of degree is necessary for the fire chief of the future. Based on the research,

personal insight, and experience, the author believes that the minimum educational requirement for fire chiefs should be a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university. Examples of study disciplines could include fire, public, business, or safety administration, fire protection engineering, or emergency service management.

An educational requirement could be used as a guide to help prepare internal candidates for the fire chief position. Of the last three chiefs to lead the Yakima Fire Department, two came from outside the organization. The internal candidates were not prepared to compete with outside candidates who possessed a minimum of a bachelor's degree and had graduated from the NFA's EFO program. In today's fire service with the legal requirements, federal & state mandates, new technology, evolving standards, increased service demands, and the dynamic economic environment where cost and efficiency of service are driving forces, fire chiefs who are highly educated and experienced are essential to the continuing success of the fire service. The results of this applied research project have provided the data and information necessary to implement an educational requirement for the position of fire chief for the City of Yakima.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The problem, as previously stated, was that the City of Yakima, Washington did not have an educational requirement for the position of Fire Chief. The purpose of this applied research project was to identify educational criteria that would be useful in the selection of a fire chief for the City of Yakima and provide a recommendation to the City Manager. The research presented in this study has demonstrated the need for the City of Yakima to adopt a formal education requirement for the position of fire chief.

Based upon the literature review, analysis of classified advertisements, feedback instruments, and the analysis of the results of this applied research project, the following recommendations are intended to facilitate the development of an educational requirement for those aspiring to someday be Fire Chief for the City of Yakima:

1. A Bachelor's degree should be considered the minimum level of college experience for the position of fire chief.

- ☐ Additional consideration should be given to candidates who have a Bachelor's degree in a related field such as Fire, Public, and/or Business Administration.
- ☐ Additional consideration should be given to candidates who have a Master's degree.

2. Completion of, or participation in, the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer program is considered when evaluating fire chief candidates.

It is recommended that the implementation of these recommendations begin immediately. It is anticipated by the author that formal approval of the recommendation can be accomplished by January 1, 2003.



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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Periodical Educational Requirement Fire Chief**

*Population 50,000 to 100,000*

*1997 through 2001*

<b>Department</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>AA/AS</b>	<b>BA/BS</b>	<b>Masters</b>	<b>EFOP</b>
Evanston Fire Department	IL	74,000		Required		
Kirkland Fire Department	WA	80,000		Required		
Hoffman Estates	IL	50,000		Desired		
Battle Creak	MI	56,000		Required		
Kettering Fire	OH	60,000		Required		
Springfield	OH	70,000		Required		
City of Sunrise	FL	75,000		Required		
Salem	OR	100,000		Required		
Turlock	CA	50,000		Required		
Appleton	WI	68,729		Desired		
Yuma	AZ	65,000		Desired		
Perth Amboy	NJ	52,000		Desired		Desired
Greenwich	CT	60,000		Required		
Boca Raton	FL	69,000		Required	Desired	Required
Fairfield	CA	90,000				
Monterey Park	CA	63,000				
Woodlands	TX	50,000		Required		Desired
High Point	NC	80,000	Desired			
Nampa	ID	51,000		Required		
Okeechobee County	FL	50,399	Desired			

St. Charles	MO	54,000	Required	Required		Desired
Milpitas	CA	62,000				
Fargo	ND	84,000	Desired	Desired		
Ames	IA	50,000		Required		
Union City	CA	70,000		Required	Desired	
Downey	CA					
Bloomington	IL	65,000		Required		Desired
McAllen	TX	100,000		Required		Desired
Pocatello	ID	52,000		Desired		Desired
Drexel Heights	AZ	60,000		Required		Required
Roseville	CA	76,500		Required		
Missouri City	TX	50,000		Required		
City of Sunrise	FL	80,000		Required		
Village of Skokie	IL	60,000		Desired		
Eau Claire	WI			Required		Desired
Pompano Beach	FL	81,725		Required		
Portage	MI	50,000		Required	Desired	
Killeen	TX	84,000		Required		
Mentor	OH	50,278		Required	Desired	Desired
Waukesha	WI	64,800		Required		
Aurora	CA			Required		
Green Bay	WI	100,000	Required	Required		
Decatur	AL	54,000		Required		
Portland	MA	65,000		Required		

**APPENDIX B**

May 5, 2002

Dear

I am the Deputy Chief of Operations with the City of Yakima Fire Department and a participant in the Executive Fire Officers Program (EFOP) at the National Fire Academy. In order to fulfill the requirements of the EFOP I must complete four applied research projects. I am now completing "Executive Leadership" the fourth and last in this series. The subject of my research project is "Educational Criteria for the Selection of Fire Chief, Raising the Bar". The purpose of this letter is to solicit your input in regard to educational requirements for the position of Fire Chief for the City of Yakima.

Attached you will find a questionnaire and job description for the position of Fire Chief for the City of Yakima. I hope that you will complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope by May 20, 2002.

Please call if you have any questions concerning the research project or questionnaire. I can be contacted at the following numbers:

Home: (509) 697-9773

Work: (509) 576-6362

Sincerely,

Richard J. Andring, Deputy Chief of Operations  
Yakima Fire Department

## **APPENDIX C**

### “Education Criteria for the Selection of Fire Chief, Raising the Bar”

#### Questionnaire

**Please check one:**

- ☐ Community Member/Leader.
- ☐ City of Yakima Administration or Department/Division Head.
- ☐ Yakima Fire Department Company/Chief Officer.

**Based upon your personal knowledge and attached job description what level of formal education should be required for the position of Fire Chief: (Check one)**

- ☐ Associate Degree
- ☐ Associate Degree (Fire Science, Fire Command Administration)
- ☐ Bachelors Degree
- ☐ Bachelors Degree (Fire, Public or Business Administration)
- ☐ Masters Degree
- ☐ Masters Degree (Fire, Public or Business Administration)
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

The United States Fire Administration/National Fire Academy has designed a number of profession development programs for senior officers in key leadership roles. The most notable of these is the Academy’s Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). EFOP is designed to provide those in key leadership roles with:

- An understanding of the need to transform fire and emergency services organization from being reactive to proactive, with an emphasis on leadership development, prevention and risk reduction.
- An understanding of the need to transform fire and emergency services organizations to reflect diversity of America’s communities.
- An understanding of the value of research and its application to the profession and the value of lifelong learning.
- Enhanced executive-level knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to lead these transformations, conduct research, and engage in lifelong learning.

**Again, based upon your personal knowledge and attached job description should the completion of professional development programs such as the National Fire Academy’s, Executive Fire Officer Program be required: (circle one)**

Yes

No

**APPENDIX D***Feedback Instrument Response Table*

	<b>Number of Community Members Responding (15)</b>	<b>Number of City Adm. Staff Responding (15)</b>	<b>Number of Department Members/Officers Responding (15)</b>	<b>Total  45</b>
<b>Require No College Experience</b>			4	4
<b>Associate Degree</b>			1	1
<b>Associate Degree Fire Command Administration or Fire Science</b>	1		1	2
<b>BA Degree</b>		3		3
<b>BA/BS Degree Fire, Public or Business Administration</b>	9	9	6	24
<b>Masters</b>	1	2		3
<b>Masters Degree Fire, Public or Business Administration</b>	4	1	3	8
<b>NFA, Executive Fire Officers Program</b>	14	9	4	27

**APPENDIX E**

September 15, 2002

Richard Zais, City Manager  
City of Yakima  
129 North 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Yakima, Washington 98901

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Attached is a copy of an Applied Research Project submitted to the National Fire Academy, as part of the Executive Fire Officer Program. The Applied Research Project is titled "Education Criteria for the Selection of Fire Chief, Raising the Bar".

The purpose of the Applied Research Project was to identify educational criteria that would be useful in the selection of a Fire Chief for the City of Yakima and provide a recommendation to you for use in future selection processes.

The events surrounding September 11, 2001 have brought about unprecedented rapid changes in government and in the nations fire service. The need for strong leaders possessing the skills to implement change rapidly and effectively is paramount. A proven method of enhancing leadership skills is through education with this in mind I submit the following recommendation in regard to educational requirements for Chief of the Yakima Fire Department:

- A Bachelor's degree should be considered the minimum level of college experience for the position of fire chief.
  - Additional consideration should be given to candidates whom have a Bachelor's degree in a related field such as Fire, Public, and/or Business Administration.
  - Additional consideration should be given to candidates whom have a Master's degree.
- Completion of or participation in the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer program is considered when evaluating fire chief candidates.

If at all possible I would like to meet with you at some point to discuss my recommendations.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Andring, Deputy Chief of Operations  
Yakima Fire Department